

Yesterday and Yesterday

shifts, men shift with it. Power is their everlasting pursuit.²³ They follow it lovingly from place to place, from person to person, from idea to idea, sometimes with resultant confusion. When power shifts rapidly, the most practised power-diviners falter. By the time they have made up their minds to ingratiate themselves with, for instance, the legates of the Russian Revolution, most of these are shot as spies and traitors;²⁴ by the time they have accustomed themselves to the idea that Captain Rohm must be counted among the great ones of the earth, he is put to death. Now a Tsar Nicholas is powerful and requires adulation; now a Stalin is powerful, and also requires adulation, largely the same.²⁵ The mighty are continually being put down from their seats and the humble and meek exalted, to become mighty in their turn and fit also to be put down.

When the Thirties began, Europe was dominated by France, with an elaborate system of alliances sustained by loans in Central and Eastern Europe, with a Maginot Line in process of being completed, deeper, stronger and more comfortable than any fortifications hitherto constructed, and with a Gold Reserve stored away which amounted to nearly a third of the total

²³ cf Hobbes—"The general inclination of all mankind is a perpetual and restless desire after power which ceaseth only in death.*

²⁴ Of the Politburo under Lenin, four have been shot, one induced to commit suicide, one exiled, and only Stalin remains; of the Central Committee of the Communist Party under Lenin, six have died natural deaths, eight have been shot, one has been assassinated, one is in prison, four have disappeared, and only Stalin remains.

²⁵ In *Russia Under Soviet Rule* Mr. de Easly gives a number of examples

of the adulation which Stalin expects and receives. For instance, this from a speech by Avdienko, a writer, at the VIIth Congress of the Soviets. The speech was wildly applauded, and reported in *Pravda* in full in the issue of February i, 1935:

*I write books, I am an author; I dream of creating a lasting work. I love a girl in a new way, I am perpetuated in my children. ... All this is thanks to thee, O great teacher Stalin. Our love, our devotion, our strength, our hearts, our heroism, our life—are all thine. Take them, great Stalin, O leader of this great country. ... When the woman I love gives me a child the first word I shall teach it shall be "Stalin"/